

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 NSC-05 A-01 OPR-02 SY-05 USSS-00

SSO-00 NSCE-00 OC-05 CCO-00 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00

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O 031449Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2720

C O N F I D E N T I A L FREETOWN 0627

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SL, OVIP (STEVENS, SIAKA P.)

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT STEVENS TO VISIT U.S.

REF: FREETOWN 201

1. PRESIDENT STEVENS CALLED ME TO HIS OFFICE MORNING MARCH 3 TO TELL ME HE PLANNING TO GO TO UNITED STATES ABOUT MARCH 20, 1976, FOR ABOUT FIVE DAYS. STEVENS WILL BE ACCOMPANIED BY FOREIGN MINISTER MINAH AND A FEW OTHER GOSL OFFICIALS.

2. STEVENS SAID MAJOR PURPOSE VISIT WAS TO SPEAK TO ROBERT MCNAMARA TO IMPLORE IBRD AND IMF (SIC) TO HELP GOSL AT TIME OF SERIOUS ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES (SEE REFTTEL). STEVENS ALSO WISHES TO MAKE CASE TO USG IN HOPES WE WOULD BE SYMPATHETIC AT THIS TIME OF NEED.

3. I THANKED STEVENS FOR HIS INFORMATION AND SAID USG ALWAYS APPRECIATES KNOWING WHEN SUCH AN IMPORTANT PERSON IS VISITING OUR COUNTRY. WE WOULD BE PLEASED TO FACILITATE VISIT WHERE POSSIBLE, BUT REMINDED STEVENS THAT, WITH PRIMARY ELECTIONS IN FULL FORCE AND DURING BICENTENNIAL YEAR AND GIVEN SUCH SHORT NOTICE OF HIS VISIT, USG MAY NOT BE ABLE TO AFFORD HIM AS NICE A RECEPTION AS WE WOULD LIKE. IN TYPICAL STEVENS UNDER-
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STATEMENT, HE SAID HE WOULD BE PLEASED TO MAKE HIS CASE

TO QUOTE SOMEONE WHO HANDLES WEST AFRICA AT THE STATE
DEPARTMENT UNQUOTE.

4. COMMENT: TO THE BEST OF OUR CURRENT KNOWLEDGE, STEVENS
ONLY YESTERDAY SENT COMMUNICATION TO MCNAMARA ASKING TO
VISIT IBRD FOR PERSONAL MEETING TO EXPLAIN GOSL DIFFICULTIES
AND ENLIST IMMEDIATE FAVORABLE CONSIDERATION, SO MARCH 20
TIMING MAY BE STEVENS' DESIRE RATHER THAN IBRD CONFIRMATION.
DEPARTMENT MAY BE ABLE TO LEARN ACCURATE TIMING FROM IBRD.

5. I REALIZE DIFFICULTIES INVOLVED IN ARRANGING OFFICE
VISIT WITH PRESIDENT FORD, BUT BELIEVE SERIOUS CONSIDERATION
SHOULD BE GIVEN. POSITIVE EFFECTS WITHIN GOSL WOULD BE
LONG LASTING. ONE OFFICIAL USG SOCIAL OCCASION IS ALSO
RECOMMENDED.

6. REGARDLESS OF LEVEL AT WHICH USG RECEIVES STEVENS, I
BELIEVE SUBSTANCE CAN BE HANDLED IN SUCH A WAY AS TO GIVE
HIM SOMETHING POSITIVE HE CAN BRING BACK TO FREETOWN.
THERE HAS BEEN NO PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF DECISION TO BEGIN
USG BILATERAL AID PROGRAM IN FY 1977. STEVENS AND
A FEW OTHERS KNOW ABOUT IT, AND TODAY HE URGED ME NOT TO
DISCUSS DETAILS WITH HIS MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE YET.
EMBASSY AND USAID/L HAD PLANNED TO MAKE USG DECISION PUBLIC
DURING WEEK OF MARCH 21. IF DEPARTMENT PREFERENCES, THAT CAN EASILY
BE DEFERRED TO LET STEVENS ANNOUNCE IT AS QUOTE RESULT UNQUOTE
OF HIS VISIT. PLEASE ADVISE.

7. STEVENS ALSO BELIEVES USG HAS BEEN HELPFUL IN PAST
AND CAN NOW HELP IN URGING IBRD TO LOOK POSITIVELY TOWARD
GOSL. HE ASSURED ME THAT GOSL WAS WORKING HARD TO IMPROVE
ITS FINANCIAL SITUATION. IF IBRD OFFICIALS ARE PLANNING
TO BE POSITIVE TO GOSL, IT WOULD BE HELPFUL IF STEVENS
WERE TO GAIN IMPRESSION THAT USG HAD BEEN HELPFUL IN
DETERMINING IBRD POSITION.

8. ON POLITICAL SIDE, OCCASION WOULD BE USEFUL OPPORTUNITY
TO PURSUE KOREA, PUERTO RICO, AND ISSUES AT AFRICAN LABOR
MINISTERS MEETING WHICH STEVENS WILL OPEN SHORTLY AFTER
RETURN TO FREETOWN. END COMMENTS.
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SAMUELS

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